

systems. It is difficult to determine where the Examiner found this motivation. It is certainly not in the Edelson patent. Indeed, it is conclusionary and unsupported by any evidence.

For the foregoing reasons it is respectfully urged that all claims in the present application are in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully requested.

If additional fees are required please charge them to Deposit Account No. 18-1167.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned **"Version with markings to show changes made."**

Respectfully submitted,

By:

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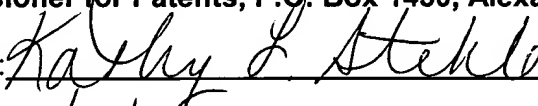
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5/20/03

**"Version with markings to show changes made."**

1. A method of dispensing, tracking and managing pharmaceutical products utilizing prescribers, pharmacies, and a central computing station, comprising the steps of:
  - a) forming a series of product cards by encoding on respective product cards information that identifies a particular pharmaceutical product;
  - b) issuing the product cards to participating prescribers;
  - c) activating the product cards after issuance to prescribers by the prescribers communicatively linking the product cards to the central computing station and wherein activation is established by the central computing station verifying the authenticity of the product cards, recording selected information encoded on the product cards in a database associated with the central computing station, and finally approving activation;
  - d) transferring a respective activated product card from a prescriber to a patient;
  - e) the patient in turn presenting the activated product card to a participating pharmacy;
  - f) validating the activated product card at the pharmacy by the pharmacy communicatively linking the presented product card with the central computing station and verifying that the presented product card has in fact been activated [and not previously validated];
  - g) after validating the presented product card, the pharmacy then dispensing the approved pharmaceutical product to the patient; and
  - h) [periodically] accounting to the participating pharmacies for pharmaceutical product dispensed [in accordance with the records of the database associated with the central computing system].

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the product cards when delivered to a prescriber are in an unactivated state and wherein the activation of the product cards takes place while the [same] product cards are in the possession of a prescriber.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein authorization for both prescribers and pharmacies is established in part at least by issuing a uniquely identifying authorizing media to each participating prescriber and pharmacy and wherein the step of authorization entails prescribers and pharmacies establishing a communication link between the issued authorizing media and the central computing station wherein the central computing station effectively scans the issued authorizing media so as to authenticate the [same] authorizing media.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein prescribers activate the pharmaceutical product media prior to the [same] pharmaceutical product media being issued to a patient, and wherein the activation by the prescriber includes the prescriber communicatively linking the pharmaceutical product media to a central computing station wherein the central computing station records encoded information from the pharmaceutical product media into a database associated with the central computing station, and wherein validation by the pharmacy includes communicatively linking the presented pharmaceutical product media with the central computing station to determine if the pharmaceutical product media has in fact been activated by a prescriber.